

**For Immediate Release**

June 12, 2012

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## **City of San José receives \$600,000 arts grant to light up Downtown**

*ArtPlace grant to launch four pilot projects for "Illuminating Downtown" Program*

SAN JOSE, Calif. – A \$600,000 grant to San José from "ArtPlace," a national arts funding organization, will support a pilot program called "Illuminating Downtown" that will light up specific sites in downtown San José combining the themes of art, technology, and environmental sustainability.

Downtown areas include the South First Area (SoFA) and San Pedro Square, Illuminating Downtown will focus on creating "beacons, gateways, way-finding, and points of interaction" to engage the community and create vibrancy.

"With this grant we can showcase Silicon Valley technologies to create opportunities that will enliven the downtown experience," said San José Mayor Chuck Reed.

The first art illumination project will be at the downtown gateway of Highway 87 at Santa Clara Street. The artist selected for the first project is Dan Corson, who previously helped prepare the City's Diridon Station Area Art Plan. The project is scheduled for installation by winter 2013. The site was selected by a partnership of the San José Office of Cultural Affairs and the Beautification Committee of the San José Downtown Property Owners' Association.

"We are extremely excited about the Illuminating Downtown Project and happy to hear that with the ArtPlace grant, the City will be able to move forward with the project," said Councilmember Sam Liccardo (District 3). "This funding will have a profound and positive effect on Downtown, creating new and exciting ways for art to be experienced."

*[more]*

The San José Public Art Program was awarded the competitive grant out of more than 2,100 letters of inquiry and 147 finalists, and it is the only Bay Area city to receive an ArtPlace grant this year. ArtPlace is a collaboration of eleven national foundations, six of the nation's largest banks, and eight federal agencies including the National Endowment for the Arts to accelerate creative placemaking across the U.S.

"Across the country, cities and towns are using the arts to help shape their social, physical, and economic characters," said NEA Chairman Rocco Landesman. "The arts are a part of everyday life, and I am thrilled to see yet another example of an arts organization working with city, state, and federal offices to help strengthen and revitalize their communities through the arts."

ArtPlace was formed to help shape and support creative placemaking, the physical and social character of a community around arts and cultural activities. To date ArtPlace has raised almost \$50 million to transform communities with strategic investments in the arts.

"Illuminating Downtown exemplifies the best in creative placemaking," said Carol Coletta, director of ArtPlace. "It demonstrates a deep understanding of how smart investments in art, design and culture as part of a larger portfolio of revitalization strategies can change the trajectory of communities and increase economic opportunities for people."

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#### **About ArtPlace**

ArtPlace is a collaboration of Bloomberg Philanthropies, The Ford Foundation, The James Irvine Foundation, The John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, The Kresge Foundation, The McKnight Foundation, The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, The Rockefeller Foundation, Rasmuson Foundation, The Robina Foundation, The William Penn Foundation and an anonymous donor. In addition to the NEA, federal partners are the departments of Housing and Urban Development, Health and Human Services, Agriculture, Education and Transportation, along with leadership from the White House Office of Management and Budget and the Domestic Policy Council. ArtPlace is also supported by six major financial institutions. For more information, visit [www.artplaceamerica.org](http://www.artplaceamerica.org).

#### **About the Artist**

Dan Corson's Artwork straddles the disciplines of Art, Theatrical Design, Architecture, and Landscape Architecture. His projects have ranged from complex rail stations and busy public intersections to quiet interpretive buildings, meditation chambers and galleries. He is particularly interested in green design and new technologies and how these tools can help frame and amplify the natural world and our shifting relationship to it. For more information, visit [www.dancorson.com](http://www.dancorson.com).

#### **About the Office of Cultural Affairs Public Art Program**

The City of San José Public Art Program, a division of the San José Office of Economic Development, seeks to build community identity by initiating artworks and exhibitions that enliven our community. Through active engagement between the artists and project stakeholders, public art strives to reflect the City's ethnic diversity, historic richness, and envision its present and future. Visit the Office of Cultural Affairs website, [www.sanjoseculture.org](http://www.sanjoseculture.org).

#### **About the City of San José**

From its founding in 1777 as California's first city, San José has been a leader, driven by its spirit of innovation. Today, San José stands as the largest city in Northern California and the Capital of Silicon Valley - the world's leading center of innovation. The city, the 10th largest in the U.S., is committed to remaining a top-ranked place to do business, to work and to live. For more information, visit [www.sanjoseca.gov](http://www.sanjoseca.gov).

*This news release is posted online at [www.sanjoseca.gov](http://www.sanjoseca.gov).*